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Sameness and difference in narrative modes and narrative sense making: The case of Ramsey Campbell's "The Scar"

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Abstract: The article discusses basic questions of narrative studies and definitions of narrative from a historical and conceptual perspective in order to map the terrain between different narratologies. The focus is placed on the question of how fiction interacts with other realms of our lives or, more specifically, how reading fiction both involves and affects our everyday meaning making operations. British horror writer Ramsey Campbell's (b. 1946) short story "The Scar" (1967) will be used as a test case to show how both narrative modes of representation and the reader's narrative sense making operations may travel between art and the everyday, from fiction to life and back. We argue that the cognitively inspired narrative studies need to pair up with linguistically oriented narratology to gain the necessary semiotic sensitivity to the forms and modes of narrative sense making. Narratology, in turn, needs to explore in detail what it is in the narrative form that enables it to function as a tool for reaching out and making sense of the unfamiliar. In our view, reading fictional narratives such as "The Scar" can help in learning and adopting linguistic resources and story patterns from fiction to our everyday sense making efforts.

Keywords: narrative, narrative studies, semiotic, sense making, fictionality

1 Sameness and difference in narrative studies

Narrative studies is a diverse field in many respects: in definitions of what narrative is, in disciplinary traditions, as well as in research methodologies and research orientations. Even in the heyday of structuralist narratology, narrative was

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understood in at least two different ways: the story and its organization (see Rimmon-Kenan 2006). Narrative studies nowadays is a thriving ground for different subcategories like socionarratology, cognitive narratology, discourse narratology, narrative hermeneutics, feminist narratology or narrative medicine, just to name a few. Therefore, the question of “sameness” and “difference” in narratology should be narrowed down to be able to give any answer to it. In this paper, we will first go through some basic questions of narrative studies and definitions of narrative from a historical and conceptual perspective in order to map the terrain between different narratologies. We then concentrate on the question of how fiction interacts with other realms of our lives or, more specifically, how reading fiction both involves and affects our everyday meaning making operations. British horror writer Ramsey Campbell’s (b. 1946) short story “The Scar” (1967) will be used as a test case to show how both narrative modes of representation and the reader’s narrative sense making operations may travel between art and the everyday, from fiction to life and back.

The recent decades have witnessed in narrative studies a leaning towards the emphasis on a storyworld, as well as a readerly orientation towards storyworlds. In contrast to classical theories of narrative that systematically emphasized temporality and causal sequence, cognitive-theoretically informed narratology has been well on its way to elaborating the processes of immersion (Ryan 2001), readerly orientation within the storyworld (Herman 2002, 2009), and perceptual positioning on the levels of storyworld, narration and the actual reading process (Jahn 1996). Here we can find a kind of sameness approach, since these approaches have systematized the reading process by analogy to real-life experience. Readers navigate within storyworlds, become immersed in them, and they try to frame and apperceive whatever textual strangeness befalls them. The seminal study suggesting this “natural” connection between literary narratives and real-life experiential schemata is Monika Fludernik’s *Towards a “natural” narratology* (1996). For Fludernik, the prototypical case of narrative is the orally transmitted story, and textual and artistic design is regarded only as a variable of conversational parameters. She argues that these natural parameters constitute the basis for the reader’s effort to narrativize texts, to make sense of them.

With the central term narrativization Fludernik refers, as a source of inspiration, to Jonathan Culler’s notion of naturalization. Culler’s view on the reason and function of naturalization, however, does differ from Fludernik’s take on narrativization. Culler’s (1975: 134) starting point is the fundamental paradox of literature. Its divergence from ordinary communication makes it compelling, and yet this divergence needs to be naturalized for the reader to understand the meaning and value of literature. Therefore, a basic difference can be found between Culler’s “naturalization” and Fludernik’s “narrativization.” Whereas Culler coined

his term to explain the reader's activity in coming to terms with the strangeness of fiction, Fludernik understands the reader to apply the same cognitive processes and schemata whether interpreting narrative literature or coping in everyday communicative situations. For this reason, her argument is that no special naturalization is needed in the case of fiction, as the same processes of narrativization operate in understanding any narrative, be it an oral story or a novel.

Yet it would be an oversimplification of Fludernik's theory to understand it only in terms of what she argues to bring fiction and other narrative realms close to each other. What seems to be important for both Culler's and Fludernik's models of narrative sense making is the role of a genre and other artistic conventions. Culler (1975: 137) states: "what we speak of as conventions of a genre or an *écriture* are essentially possibilities of meaning, ways of naturalizing the text and giving it a place in the world which our culture defines". Fludernik (2003: 244) sees the narrativization process to operate on four levels of transmission. They include basic-level schemata (real world understanding), perspectival schemata (ACTION, TELLING, EXPERIENCING, VIEWING, REFLECTING), generic and historical frames (such as satire and dramatic monologue) and, finally, the level of narrativization that unites the other levels into a coherent whole.

Fludernik's theory has been understood primarily in the terms of the real life schemas and the perspectival frames, whereas the generic and historical – the artistic tradition and conventions – has been mostly neglected. These aspects should gain more attention, because genre and discursive resources employed in different genres allow a more complex understanding of the traffic between conversational and literary storytelling, or between our understanding of the world we live in and the worlds represented in fiction. This brings us back to the division between story and its organization, the ways narratives occur as semiotic representations.

Recent developments in fictionality studies have demonstrated how narrative modes characteristic of generic fiction do occur also in non-fictional narrative environments. What needs further elaboration is how these narrative modes, especially those related to consciousness representation and enabling the portrayal of the mind of the other, affect the interpretive operations and outcomes in non-fictional narrative realms (see Hatavara & Mildorf 2017a, 2017b). In this paper, we look at the same question from the other end – how narrative modes and narrative sense making operations in fiction may affect our everyday experience and understanding of the world.

Literary imagination contributes to how people envision, represent, and ultimately perceive their lives and the lives of others. David Herman (2011: 10) maintains that "the procedures used to engage with the minds evoked in fictional narratives necessarily piggyback on those used to interpret minds encountered in

other contexts (and vice versa)". We emphasize the much overlooked "vice versa", and claim that literature and literary devices are crucial to finding, testing and distributing ways of expressing cultural and social subject matter. For example, the study of fictional minds has shown both the distinctive ability of fiction to portray the mind of another person, and the kinship of minds working both inside and outside of fiction in sense making operations (Cohn 1978; Palmer 2004). This allows the reader to situate herself in the storyworld and adopt the temporal and spatial situation in the fictional reality (Herman 2002: 14–15). The qualities of narrative and the procedures used to interpret them do travel between fictional and non-fictional realms, but the interpretive effects need a closer study.

Fiction has the unique ability to create and represent human minds both internally and externally, even to verbalize emotions and mental states the subject is unaware of having. Narrators use internal focalization of other people thus portraying the world as someone else perceives it, and narrators also use psychonarration to inform the reader of a character's feelings and inner motivations they themselves are (yet) unaware of. Narrative discourse modes like free indirect discourse mix the voices of the narrator and the character bringing about dual-voicedness and interpretive uncertainty on whose perception or opinion the reader encounters. In fiction, the world presented and the minds perceiving it cannot be separated, and it is the reader's task to make sense of what may be real or imagined in a storyworld. The culturally shared and the idiosyncratically understood may blend in ways by which the minds and the worlds become inseparable (see Hatavara & Toikkanen 2017).

What is more, by blending scripts, imagining non-existing scenarios and reviving traditions literature constantly influences the ways in which people experience and imagine social life and tell their own stories. Therefore, narratology has the tools to identify and analyze how experiences and feelings manifest and become shareable in our mediatized environment. Narratological tools that analyze discursive agency and positioning are needed, as societal discussion and social interaction is based on constructing hypothetical narratives about other persons' reasons and intentions (Hutto 2008). In literary studies representing and attributing minds in fiction has been a core question since the study of the novel began (see Lubbock 1921; Cohn 1978). Today it is recognized that changing and evolving models of fictional minds correlate with the growing cultural complexity of the human mind in general (Herman 2011). The intermental workings of the mind are developed in fictional practices where they come to the fore, and the ways we understand reality and fiction cross into each other (see Palmer 2004, 2010; Hutto 2008). Therefore, narrative fiction may inform us on the workings of interpretive minds both inside and out of fictional narrative environments. Before turning to the case study, we offer a suggestion of three different types of conceptualizing

narratives that have cut across the fields of literary theory and narrative studies in the social sciences.

2 Narrative as cognitive tool, rhetorical act and semiotic articulation

In the social sciences, it was Jerome Bruner (1991) who famously placed stories as explanatory vehicles in situations where Folk Psychology, the canon of the expected, fails to grasp the world. Therefore, for Bruner, narrative as a form not only represents but constitutes lived reality: “It was perhaps a decade ago that psychologists became alive to the possibility of narrative as a form not only of representing but of constituting reality” (Bruner 1991). Faced with the unexpected and the unfamiliar, people resort to narratives to help bring back coherence into their experience. This insight has had great impact in the study of the pragmatics of the storytelling situation. Literary scholars have contended that arguably, narrative is “a basic human strategy for coming to terms with time, process, and change” (Herman et al. 2005). According to this cognitively inspired understanding of narrative, crafting stories help people organize their experience and the world they live in. As our case study will show, new theories in fields such as evolutionary psychology (see Clasen 2017) have developed this line of thought even further by arguing how stories can help in evolving into more advanced “biocultural” life forms.

The second trend in conceptualizing narrative is a rhetorical one, which underscores the situatedness of storytelling as an act. It is easy to find parallel examples of this definition from the social sciences and from literary theory. Back in 1981 Barbara Herrnstein Smith wrote: “we might conceive of narrative discourse most minimally and most generally as verbal acts consisting of someone telling someone else that something happened” (Smith 1981: 228). Some twenty years later James Phelan (2005) defines narrative as “somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened.” Therefore, both the rhetorical and the cognitive approach to narrative studies manifest many convergences between different disciplinary traditions in literary and social studies. In these two approaches, the emphasis lies on narrative processing as a cognitive ability, or in the interactive situation between storytelling participants, but not on narratives per se, as articulations and semiotic objects.

Semiotic, or textual definitions of narrative come mostly from the literary narratology tradition, inspired by the structuralist tradition (see Ryan 2016: 11). Gérard Genette (1980) defines, in also mentioning a story pattern, a “linguistic pro-

duction” to be essential to narrative: “any narrative . . . is a linguistic production undertaking to tell of one or several events”. In a similar manner, Gerald Prince (1982) defines narrative as a representation – for him, a narrative is “the representation of at least two real or fictive events or situations in a time sequence”. More recently, Marie-Laure Ryan (2005) has defined narrative as “the mental or textual representation of a causally linked sequence of events involving individuated and human-like agents”. Interestingly, according to this definition, a representation may exist as a mental entity as well as textual. Still, these definitions concentrate on narratives as representations mainly.

The three categories of definitions emphasize different parts of the narrative interaction: the cognitive focuses on how the receiver understands narratives, the rhetorical is mostly interested in the sender, her intentions, and the story’s designed effects, whereas the semiotic focuses on the sign, on the representation of story elements in text or another medium. This paper understands all these facets of narrative to be important but orders them so that the sign, the semiotic object, sets the analysis in motion as it moves on to looking at the rhetorical effects, together with the cognitive operations involved.

Besides the similarities between the reader’s interpretation of bodily gestures (such as shaky hands as an indication of nervousness) within and without fiction, it is indisputable that while in real life we can directly observe the other person’s bodily gestures, in literary fiction we can only imagine them through linguistic description. As one of the authors of this article has argued elsewhere, this textual organization necessarily separates readings of literary fiction from readings of, say, everyday encounters with others (Hatavara 2013: 164–167). The specific organization of a narrative, the form and style of a representation need to be taken into account (Ryan 2016: 25). In this article, we are especially interested in the interplay between the semiotic organization of a text and the cognitive processes used to interpret the story. Both are essential in the interpretation of narratives.

When looking at the different definitions of narrative, it is important to ask how we find and identify narratives based on them. Brian McHale (2016) has made a telling observation as he writes that “theory-building depends partly on determining what counts as a *prototypical object* of a particular theoretical discourse”. As McHale states, most often the prototypical object has been either a novel or everyday oral storytelling. In order to overcome this dichotomy, it is useful to look at how different definitions of narrative help to locate narratives. It has proven challenging to pinpoint “a basic human strategy”, but a recent definition of narrative helps to demonstrate the (at least) two sides of narrative. Richard Walsh (2018) claims that “[n]arrative is the semiotic articulation of linear temporal sequence; a basic cognitive mode of sensemaking that creates meaningful form with a specific temporal logic”. The two parts in Walsh’s definition must be noted be-

cause the sentence talks about two different types of narrative: the former part about a concrete object in the form of some conventional signs, the latter about an abstract ability of mind. For Walsh, “sequence” is the main concept in this definition, whereas our approach emphasizes and analyzes the “semiotic articulations”, as they can be identified in communicative situations. We also expect them to be linked with more abstract cognitive processes. For this reason, the cognitively inspired narrative studies need to pair up with linguistically oriented narratology to gain the necessary semiotic sensitivity to the forms and modes of narrative sense making. Narratology, in turn, needs to explore in detail what it is in the narrative form that enables it to function as a tool for reaching out and making sense of the unfamiliar.

3 “The Scar”

Ramsey Campbell’s short story “The Scar” (1967) shows how fiction claws into the everyday. In the town of Brichester,¹ Lindsay Rice leads a lowly and uneventful life marked by weekly visits to his sister Harriet and brother-in-law Jack Rossiter who have two children, Douglas and Elaine. Lindsay feels inferior to the Rossiters in social standing, is worried about bothering them, and hopes he was able to please them – “I wish I could do something for them so they’d be grateful to me” (Campbell 1967: 61). Meanwhile, Jack, who runs a jewellery store, has come to point where he keeps seeing Lindsay “out of a sense of duty” (Campbell 1967: 62) but remains in good terms with him because of Harriet who is concerned for her brother and how he gets along in life. The story suggests from the start that the plot may involve a relationship triangle where the two men, husband and brother, rival around Harriet, or one where the two siblings rival around Jack. Harriet explains Jack her brother’s situation: “You know I always had the best of everything and Lindsay never did – Now I’ve got you. Surely we can spare him kindness at least.” (Campbell 1967: 60) The motif of doubles – siblings, two men in a woman’s life – is of key significance in the story. It is introduced on the first page where *doppelgänger*s are mentioned as a (German) cultural phenomenon and something Lindsay had in fact witnessed: a man very closely resembling his brother-in-law. Importantly, Lindsay keeps thinking about and mentioning a book he has read about a man who rescues his friend from falling off a cliff but ends up killed himself. This story thematizes the need to do something for others, and it repeatedly

1 Campbell created the fictional location of Severn Valley, which includes the town of Brichester, as his geographical expansion of Howard Phillips Lovecraft’s Cthulhu mythos in England.

appears in Lindsay's imagination as an image of two figures falling off a cliff highlighting the motif of pairs of two.

The plot revolves around a crime spree that is taking place in Brichester. Shops have been raided, and Jack is cautious about any danger to his own establishment, not helped by Lindsay's being curious about the matter. In walking one evening to have a few drinks with Lindsay, Jack cuts through an alley where he is attacked by a figure with a face that was "merely a black egg in the shadows" (Campbell 1967: 63). Afterwards, Jack begins to turn into a different man. In Lindsay's eyes, he soon becomes a threat to his wife and children, prompting Lindsay to take the opportunity finally to do something for the family he admires. Ultimately, however, it all ends badly.

We argue that, in terms of the sameness and difference of narrative fiction and everyday narrative strategies, reading "The Scar" collapses the confident distinction between the two. While fiction and non-fiction rely on different generic traditions and may indeed make use of different narrative techniques and conventions, it does not follow that they were completely separate from another in how they employ linguistic resources and produce experience. Neither does it follow that, consequently, there was nothing special or peculiar about narrative fiction such as "The Scar" in comparison to summary explanations of the story, for instance. A careful reading will bring out key observations that any paraphrasing of the plot could easily neglect. In our analysis, we will focus on two passages:

"I read a book this week," (Campbell 1967: 64)

The grey fields were abruptly blocked by a more solid anonymity, the streets of Lower Brichester, suffocating individuality, erasing it through generations. (Campbell 1967: 70)

On the argued collapse of the distinction between narrative fiction and everyday narrative strategies in our case study, the discussion inspired by Samuel Taylor Coleridge's famous Romantic notion of the "willing suspension of disbelief" (*Biographia Literaria* 1817: Chapter XIV) will provide a useful source. Among others, Kendall Walton (1978) and Noël Carroll (1990) have analyzed the issue called the paradox of fiction – why readers are strongly affected by entities and events they know to be fictional (see Paskow 2004). In terms of the evolutionary benefits of reading fiction, and horror fiction in particular, Mathias Clasen's views (2017) will also be introduced in this context.

What is more, it is precisely the artistic arrangement and the narrative modes of consciousness representation that make the short story so compelling and affective to the reader. "The Scar" thematizes the inability of people to read each other's minds, as the characters feel totally estranged from one another and unable to read anyone else. They also often misread each other's minds (see Hyvärinen 2016), which is coupled by the reader's failing efforts to make sense of the

story. With the inconclusive ending, the reader is left teetering between (at least) two interpretive alternatives because she is unable to determine whether the minds of the two men whose perceptions and thoughts through manifold modes of mind representation guide the reader at key points are reliable or not – or if one of them is. In this way, the short story thematizes the question whether fictional minds differ from real minds in nature or degree of transparency or accessibility (see Herman 2011). At the same time, we argue that “The Scar” does more than merely follow an established genre pattern, and that the consequences of grasping the sense making practices of one’s reading of the story must not be explained away by a confident distinction between fiction and real life.

3.1 “I read a book this week”

Lindsay’s need to do something for his close ones increases in the course of the story, and he is inspired in his eventual rescue attempt by a story he has just read. He tells Jack about it:

Harriet withdrew to the kitchen. “I read a book this week,” Rice caught at the conversation, “about a man – what’s his name, no, I forget – whose friend is in danger from someone, he finds out – and he finally pulls this someone off a cliff and gets killed himself.” (Campbell 1967: 64)

In Lindsay’s mind, the moral of the story becomes mixed with his feeling of indebtedness to the Rossiters, and so, as the events unfold, references to Lindsay’s fiction-informed conscience and an image of two figures falling keep appearing in the narrative. For instance, he first becomes alert to the strange goings-on in Brichester when he sees Jack’s lookalike in the bus one morning with only one feature separating Jack and his apparent double – a lengthy scar across the latter’s face. Lindsay makes Jack aware of the incident, but withholds the information from Harriet and indeed some of the details (where the double went after leaving the bus) from Jack too. Afterwards, he agonizes over what he should have told whom.

The effect of reading stories on Lindsay’s thinking is intensified when, as a result of the attack in the alley, Jack is left with a scar similar to his double. As Lindsay attempts to make sense of the unnerving events, reality and fiction start to shift in his perception:

Something was going to happen; he sensed it looming. If he could only warn them, prevent it – but prevent what? He saw the figures falling from the cliff-top against the azure sky, the seagulls screaming around him – but the mist hung about him miserably, stifling his intentions. He began to hurry to the bus-stop. (Campbell 1967: 65)

The falling figures are those of characters in the story Lindsay has read, appearing into view out of thin air in the quotidian grey of Brichester, recharging him with the responsibility to help both his brother-in-law and sister without overt care for personal harm.

The story eventually culminates in Lindsay making his stand against Jack's double and the horrors hinted at ("He plunged into the fog, knowing that now he would be followed", Campbell 1967: 70) The men reach the alley where Jack's attack took place and make their way to the building Lindsay had seen his friend's lookalike enter before. Inside, Lindsay scours through the derelict rooms and finds what seems like a man's body in the cellar. Confronted by Jack's double in the stairs, Lindsay summons his every last bit of strength ("focusing his horror, fear and disgust with his lifetime of inaction") and tears through the entity with a brick. Stumbling his way out of the house, however, he comes across another figure just as he is about to make good: "No, he thought in despair, he couldn't fail now; the fall from the cliff had ended the menace. But already he knew." (Campbell 1967: 72) The figure in the doorway is "his height, his build" (Campbell 1967: 72), speaks with his voice, and is ready for the kill and to replace Lindsay as his double. Therefore, the novel very concretely suggests the possibility that someone we think we know, including ourselves, may turn into someone completely alien.

Clasen has celebrated in *Why Horror Seduces* (2017) the positive gains of reading horror fiction from the viewpoint of evolutionary psychology:

Horror fiction... is particularly well-equipped to allow readers and viewers to vicariously live through the worst, to model threatening scenarios, and to get imaginatively compelling experience with extreme situations and intense negative emotion. (56)

As the reader's "appetite for horror" is "an adaptation that functions to give us experience" that will "allow us to incorporate danger into our total imaginative universe" (Campbell 1967: 58), she reads in the safety of her knowledge of the distinction between fiction and reality, adding to her cognitive arsenal in continuously evolving as she proceeds. Indeed Lindsay perceives himself in this light as his passive everyday routine takes a turn towards the heroic – he has not been reading novels such as *The Lord of the Rings* for no purpose. The extreme situation in his immediate environment gives him the chance to incorporate his experience and actually put his horror to good use, with bad results. The question lingers if the reader is able to adapt the outcome as any kind of cognitive improvement either.

It is very clear in "The Scar" how the protagonist's sense of reality is invaded and finally ended by something he has read in a book. The fictional character of Lindsay Rice exemplifies the kind of psychological ambiguity – a conventional

strategy of narrative fiction – by which it is hard to tell whether the events described are happening for real in the story, whether they just take place in his head, or if the events are real but affected by his distorted perception. Considering Rice alone, the reader may choose willingly to suspend their disbelief, imagine that the town of Brichester is being taken over by alien doppelgangers, and pretend to be shocked or frightened by the revelation. In Walton's theory, such a choice could be made at the reader's leisure, just as he demonstrates with his example of "Charles" pretending to be afraid of the movie he is watching ("He thinks of himself as being afraid of it", Walton 1978: 16; "He plays his own game with the images", Walton 1978: 18). Meanwhile, Carroll would describe the reader's "cause for interest" in the horrifying as an offshoot of her "fascination with the impossible" that "outweighs the distress it engenders" (Carroll 1990: 206). However, as both Walton and Carroll seem mainly interested in the affective and epistemological consequences of the potential existence of ontological objects – are they real or not, and how should we feel about them? – the narrative strategies by which the objects first appear into view are set aside. When the question of whether the doubles in "The Scar" are real or not becomes the primary focus, the reader may quite easily choose to believe that Rice has just lost his mind, tracking down the signs of his madness. As a consequence of this decision, the ontological realms of fiction (Rice) and real life (reader) remain confidently removed from each other, because there is nothing to suggest otherwise. It is only when we look at the other minds represented in the story that clues to the contrary begin to show.

3.2 "The grey fields were abruptly blocked by a more solid anonymity"

Lindsay is not the only character in "The Scar" whose mind we can read. In the first half of the story, Jack's internal focalization is used at least as much as Lindsay's, and there is evidence of Harriet's thoughts too (see the paragraph on "Her eyes gathered details", Campbell 1967: 67). Initially the reader's access into Jack's mind portrays him as a decent man and husband, even if one rankled by the ongoing crime spree and Lindsay's repeated efforts at goodwill. The passage in which Jack is on his way walking to his brother-in-law's house is a complex mixture of his own ruminations and narratorial intrusion:

Yes, he liked to walk through Lower Brichester. He'd made the walk, with variations, for almost two years; ever since his night out drinking with Rice had settled into a habit. It had been his suggestion, primarily to please Harriet, for he knew she liked to think he and Lindsay were friends; (Campbell 1967: 62)

Headlights blazed down a side street, billowing with mist and motorcycle fumes. They spotlighted a broken wall across the street from Rossiter; a group of girls huddled on the shattered bricks, laughing forth fog as the motorcycle gang fondled them roughly with words. (Campbell 1967: 62)

The first quotation demonstrates several embedded minds as the reference to Lindsay Rice switches from his last name to his first. The first two sentences are internally focalized through Jack who tries to enjoy his walk to the house of his brother-in-law, referred to as Rice. In the third sentence Jack's use of language changes as his internal focalization adopts the position of his wife from whose perspective her brother is referred to by his first name. The last sentence of the first quotation portrays what Jack (thinks he) knows: Harriet likes to believe Jack and Lindsay are friends. The change into Harriet's language use highlights the superficial nature of Jack's assumed knowledge of her mind. The use of Harriet's verbalization brings about a similar two-voicedness in Jack's thoughts as free indirect discourse brings between a narrator and a character – is Jack's knowledge of his wife's beliefs that accurate, after all?

Whereas both Jack and the narrator are in the habit of calling Lindsay by his last name, the switch in the latter quotation to calling Jack by his last name must be attributed to the narrator. The story often gives the impression that whenever the narrative's focus shifts from individual perception (Lindsay, Jack, Harriet) to a narratorial voice that describes Brichester's general culture of squalor and decay, individuals become hopeless, disposable game for a looming threat.

Nowhere is this hopelessness more pronounced than in the moment when, ironically, Lindsay chooses to make his stand against Jack's double. The situation at the Rossiter house has escalated beyond repair and, while not everyone might be dead, Lindsay is not going to wait any longer. The chain of events noted above ensues, and the passage after his plunge "into the fog" (Campbell 1967: 70) begins:

The grey fields were abruptly blocked by a more solid anonymity, the streets of Lower Brichester, suffocating individuality, erasing it through generations. (Campbell 1967: 70)

It is impossible to tell whether the sentence expresses Lindsay's thought or if it represents another narratorial intrusion. What the reader knows for sure at this point is that access to Jack's thoughts has been lost, and his mind is completely unreadable in the second half of the story. An everyday fact – people have no access to each other's thoughts – has taken over the strategy of fiction known as mind reading, producing fear and unease. The "more solid anonymity" of the preceding quotation invades Brichester's cultural atmosphere haunted by Cold War and nameless Lovecraftian terrors ("Was this the key? Had someone been driven underground by blitz conditions, or had something been released by

bombing?”, Campbell 1967: 70), while it threatens to destroy the individual speaking voices that fall beneath its weight. Lindsay, finally in making his stand, manages to hold on to his experience – the rest of the paragraph reverts to his focalization – but, in the end, the resistance proves futile.

The short story plays with the reader's efforts to read the characters' mind and to make sense of the story elements and the plot by giving the reader access to the minds of the characters at moments when their perceptions and insights into the other minds seem skewed and unreliable. This is particularly true about Lindsay. The theme of him encountering something that is difficult for him to make sense of is introduced right at the first sentence of the short story: “*It was most odd on the bus today,’ Lindsay Rice said*”. (Campbell 1967: 59, emphasis in the original) Lindsay has seen what he suspects to be Jack's double. Later in the short story the reader is provided access to Lindsay's mind at the moments of his possibly mistaken revelations about his brother-in-law being replaced by another person or potentially an inhuman entity. Lindsay is possibly misled by both his passions and by his habit of interpreting the events through the books he has read.

After the attack, once Jack has recuperated enough to go back home, Lindsay visits the couple bringing books with him to lend to Jack. This part of the short story uses Lindsay's internal focalization, revealing from the start his keen observations of his sister and Jack: “it was clear she had been crying”, “Jack appeared in the hall, one hand possessively gripping the living-room door-frame”. (Campbell 1967: 65) The observations are key motifs in Lindsay's perception as he goes on to take action: his sister is sad and oppressed, his brother-in-law an obsessive tyrant. A little later in the text Jack is irritated by the siblings whispering about his condition in the next room:

“What's all that whispering?” a voice shouted. “Aren't I one of the family anymore?”

“Jack, don't be illogical. Surely Lindsay and I can talk.” But she motioned Lindsay into the living-room.

“Treating me like a stranger in my own house!”

Lindsay dropped the book. Suddenly he realized what he'd seen: Jack's face was paler, thinner than last week; the scar looked older than seemed possible. He bent for the book. No, what he was thinking was absurd; Harriet would have noticed. Jack was simply worried. It must be worry. (Campbell 1967: 65–66)

In this passage, Jack in the next room out of sight is perceived only as “a voice” first. This attribution as “a voice” and not as “Jack” gives the first clue of his new strangeness, and Jack himself offers this explanation in lamenting his treatment “like a stranger”. Lindsay, hearing the word stranger, first drops his book, then retrieves it, and after leaving the Rossiters throws the book away as he tries to make sense of the situation. He is described as “suddenly realizing” that it is in-

deed so that Jack is a stranger and wonders if his sister would not have noticed the same. When Harriet later visits Lindsay, he tries to persuade her to understand this. As Harriet talks about her duties towards her husband, the reader is offered access to Lindsay's mind:

She can't believe that! Lindsay cried. He tottered on the edge of revelation, and fought with his tongue. "Don't you think he's acting as if he was a different person?" He could not be more explicit. (Campbell 1967: 68)

Here the reader is first given a direct quotation of Lindsay's thoughts followed by the narrator giving information on the affective tone of this internal cry of desperation. The second sentence is psychonarration by which the narrator more closely relates Lindsay's thoughts and mental processes. The last sentence is in the form of free indirect discourse where the reader can deduce Lindsay's thought of being as explicit as possible. Still, even if Lindsay thinks he knows Jack has changed and does his best to make Harriet understand, he fails. This failure to communicate – perhaps coupled with a failure correctly to understand another mind – becomes the key reason for Lindsay finally taking action in his fiction-informed duty to rescue his sister and the children.

4 Conclusion: Fiction claws into the everyday

The futility of the reassurance of being able to read other people's minds is the most horrifying conclusion of "The Scar" on two levels. First, it breeds distrust and paranoia in those exposed to it, whether in fiction or real life. Two, it collapses any confident distinction between narrative fiction and everyday narrative strategies. Mind reading is a strategy of fiction we employ each day when we try to make sense – in reading and writing, watching and listening – of why people act the way they do and what they might think. When deprived of this alternative and forced to face reality, enacting the fiction of "The Scar", our everyday narrative strategies of making sense are exposed as being not that dissimilar from our ways of reading fiction. The unreadability of minds horrifies in the story and, because the unreadability of minds is an everyday fact, the reader is horrified too.

To counter the effect, the reader may assume the Coleridgean strategy known as suspension of disbelief, knowingly distancing themselves from the story as everyday readers in order to pretend that, in Walton's fashion, they believe in the story as fiction. Thinking on the terrible can be fascinating, as Carroll might say. Indeed, as long as other minds remain readable, there is nothing to worry about, and if they become blocked, as in real life, readers have the choice of reasserting the strategy of fiction by recalling that it is "only" fiction, something different

from the everyday. For there to be an evolutionary benefit to reading fiction, as advocated by Clasen, the reader must choose to remain partly in the realm of fiction (of readable minds and confident distinction) to keep believing in its improving qualities. In doing so, the reader will transport how they make sense of the everyday into how they read fiction – as a generic narrative mode with its techniques and conventions that employ linguistic resources and produce experience. Fiction claws into the everyday and contaminates it, and vice versa.

There is no paradox of fiction in “The Scar” but a fact of life. The conclusion brings us back to the question of sameness and difference between artistic and everyday narrative objects and the sense making operations involved in encountering them. Fictional narratives thematize our everyday efforts to read other minds and to understand social situations. We can learn and adopt linguistic resources and story patterns from fiction to our everyday sense making efforts. Literature, literally as part of our everyday lives in the form of linguistic descriptions, can be used to inform us on the narrative resources employable in different sense making endeavors.

The travelling of narrative modes and interpretive resources from fictional to non-fictional realms collapses neither the narrative objects nor the narrative sense making operations into any indistinct sameness where one definition of narrative or one narrative methodology is fit to be used in the analysis and interpretation of all narratives. Instead, any narrative inquiry should be fully informed by both the manifold nature of narratives and the richness of theoretical and methodological approaches in narrative studies. Narratives infuse our lives as medium-specific types of semiotic objects from novels to jokes, from advertisements to social media updates and beyond. Even though narrative modes such as certain linguistic resources used to represent the minds of others travel between narrative environments, we should always pay attention to the semiotic qualities and conventions used in any articulation of a story into a narrative in a specific medium. The text that represents cannot be isolated from the represented, and therefore interpretation both as attention to signs and as recognition and reshaping of cognitive schemas requires scrutiny.

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